



CONTACTING THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ON BEHALF OF OTHERS

Am I limited in my dealing with the United States Government in my personal capacity?

- Yes. You may not represent anyone (other than yourself) before a Federal agency or Federal court, which means that, unless an exception applies, you cannot contact a Federal agency or court on behalf of anyone else in order to influence Government action (including by serving as an expert witness). This restriction even applies to contacting a Federal agency on behalf of a family member (except as noted below). You also may not receive payments based on the representational activities of others before a Federal agency or Federal court (such as from partnership distributions if you are a partner). You may, however, contact Congress on behalf of someone else.

Are there any exceptions?

- Yes; you may represent:
 - another employee in a personnel dispute (if not paid and it does not conflict with your Federal duties);
 - a spouse, parent, child, estate, or someone for whom you have a power of attorney (but *only* if you receive prior approval through an ethics official); and
 - o a Federal employee organization (in some situations).

When are the limitations on representing a Federal employee organization before a Federal agency or court?

- You may not represent an organization composed primarily of other Federal employees (or their family members):
 - in a claim against the Government,
 - in a proceeding,
 - if the matter at issue involves financial payments from the Government (such as a contract or grant), or
 - if you receive payment for the representational activities.

If I work for less than 130 days per year am I covered by these restrictions?

- Some of them.
 - If you worked 60 days or fewer in a 365-day period, you cannot contact the Government on a specific-party matter on which you worked as part of your Government duties.
 - If you worked 61-130 days, you are cannot contact the Government on a specific-party matter pending before the Commerce Department (even if you did not work on the matter).
 - If you worked 130 days or fewer, you can contact the Government on general policy matters.